



Filing before the Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of
The Future of Media and Information
Needs of Communities in a Digital Age

GN Docket No. 10-25

Montgomery Community Television, Inc. (MCT) is filing this letter in support of the comments for the Alliance for Community Media and the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors. This letter is also to reinforce to the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) that Public Access, Educational and Governmental (PEG) channels must be part of any discussion on the future of media and information needs of communities in a digital age.

MCT is the only Public Access Television Station serving the residents of Montgomery County, Maryland, a community of over one million residents. Montgomery Community Television Inc. operates two public access television stations under the brand name of Access Montgomery, or AMTV19 and AMTV21. Both stations are streamed live on our web site at www.accessmontgomery.tv and we offer an on demand 'View it Now' archive of our programming, also on www.accessmontgomery.tv.

As a PEG entity, MCT fills unique community needs by encouraging and sponsoring television programming and broadband media that meets community needs and offers forums for free expression.

Access Montgomery has operated television training facilities designed to nurture our resident's creativity, provide access to connect and inform the local community as well as enhance community involvement. For twenty-five years, Access Montgomery has trained county residents in television production and provided two fully-equipped studios to empower residents with the resources to create informative or entertaining television programs. Access Montgomery's Production Department has consistently created relevant and engaging television programming that provides vital information and resources to the community. Throughout the

years, Access Montgomery, has regularly collaborated and partnered with local public-service organizations to communicate with residents concerning essential and compelling information. Only AMTV has the mission, the independence and the creative energy to engage this level of connectivity at a time Montgomery County residents need it most.

Unless the Commission actively encourages development of public access, there is no guarantee that public access will remain in our future.

PEG channels are currently facing significant challenges including but not limited to:

- Abuse of state franchise legislation by operators in order to limit or sunset traditional sources of PEG support.
- Operators employing state franchise laws to limit or sunset the availability of PEG channels.
- Operators refusing to treat PEG channels in the same way they treat local broadcast channels. Among the practices that have made it more difficult for consumers to find and view PEG channels are: operators that move channels to less desirable channel locations, operators that require consumers to obtain additional equipment to view PEG channels, or operators that aggregate PEG channels on a technically deficient video stream, which lacks the functionality of commercial channels.

The Commission's delay in addressing a number of PEG community petitions for declaratory rulings to restrict the above complained practices is jeopardizing the future of community programming.

Unless the Commission actively encourages development of public access, there is no guarantee that public access will remain in our future. And that would be a grave loss for communities around the country.

Respectfully,

Merlyn Reineke
Executive Director
Montgomery Community Television, Inc.